Peter Adamson and G. Fay Edwards (eds.): *Animals: A History*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018, pp. xiv + 454. £22.99 (pb), ISBN: 978-0-199-37597-4.

Western philosophy has not been kind to animals. Aristotle held that nonhuman animals were irrational and driven by unthinking appetites. Descartes claimed that animals were biological automata with no internal experience. And Kant argued that animals had no intrinsic worth and could be relegated to the category of mere things. Each of these positions had consequences for our treatment of animals: we do not have moral obligations towards things, machines or (arguably) non-rational creatures. As such, these historical figures have become canonised as the antagonists of the contemporary animal rights movement. From our enlightened position we wonder: how *could* they have thought that?

Animals: A History does not seek to defend or repudiate these historical positions. Rather it aims to show that these positions did not result from mere error, prejudice or ignorance of animal behaviour. As co-editor Peter Adamson cautions us: in our modern attempts to avoid underestimating nonhuman animals, we should be careful not to underestimate 'the humans of the past' (2). Each of the twelve chapters of this collection presents a nuanced reading of a historical period or thinker and shows their attitudes towards non-human animals to be well-developed, explicitly argued and informed by up-to-date empirical knowledge. Readers might still disagree with these historical positions, but they will be unable to reject them off-hand.

Appropriately enough for a collection exploring historical context, the volume is tightly focused around central themes which reflect issues of central interest to contemporary Anglo-American philosophy: the philosophy of mind (here, the difference between animal and human cognition); the philosophy of science (here how we investigate and use animals in our scientific inquiries); and moral obligations between individuals (here possibly including nonhuman animals). With these themes in mind, the collection moves chronologically through historical periods of philosophical interest. The collection focuses on Ancient and Medieval philosophy (chapters 1-5) with the rest of the collection exploring Modern philosophy and context (chapters 6-9) and concepts and figures within the development of modern science (chapters 9-11). Robert Garner closes the collection with a remarkably succinct and accessible overview of the contemporary animal rights literature (chapter 12).

Focusing as it does on these issues, the collection mostly avoids engaging with concepts and thinkers central to the 'continental' tradition. The notable exception to this rule is Paul Katsafanas' contribution. Katsafanas expertly charts the concept of 'drive' through its beginnings in eighteenth century philosophy and science, to the metaphysical and ethical implications of the concept when applied to human nature. The paper shows how Romantic and Idealist philosophers such as Schiller, Schelling and Schopenhauer struggled with the significance of holding unconscious drives (rather than self-consciousness) to be the fundamental but cognitively inaccessible essence of our nature (258). For the most part, however, the collection leaves exploring the meaning and significance of the human–animal divide to the 'reflections' which intersperse the collection. These short pieces explore art and literature relating to animals across different cultures: Ancient Greek fables (Jeremy B. Lefkowitz); Chinese painting (Hou-Mei Sung); Central African Mythology (Allen

F. Roberts); Medieval European literature (Sabine Obermaier; James Simpson) and Renaissance painting (Cecilia Muratori). Though these pieces are often too short to be anything more than intriguing, they serve to remind the reader of the deep symbolic depth given to nonhuman animals across human cultures and practices.

The three major historical antagonists of the animal rights movement, Aristotle, Descartes and Kant, are each given their own chapter. Devin Henry's contribution shows that Aristotle, despite separating humans from animals through our possession of a rational soul, held that animals had a wide range of cognitive abilities. Animals' capacity for sensation and '*phantasia*' (imagination and mental representation) give them desires (14); memory (12); voluntary movement (21); experiences (13) and even something analogous with moral virtue (16). Nonetheless, animals' lack of practical wisdom and inability for true action justifies us in utilizing, killing and eating them (23). Deborah J. Brown's chapter offers an exceptionally clear articulation of the historical and philosophical pressures which led Descartes to argue that animals were automata. Brown presents Descartes as responding to two Hellenistic debates about the nature of nonhuman animals: the question of whether sensation requires intelligence; and the question of whether animals use language (192). Descartes' mechanistic theory of perception, and his observations about the generality of human language, led him to answer 'no' to both questions. Patrick Kain's contribution offers a similarly subtle understanding of Kant's position. Contrary to popular interpretation, Kain argues that Kant had knowledge of and interest in animal behaviour (216) and that he held animals to be proper objects of our moral feelings (224). Though our moral duties regarding animals are still indirect duties concerning our own cultivation, Kain successfully demonstrates that animals occupied a unique place in Kant's moral theory.

Alongside articles about specific thinkers, the collection also contains explorations of whole traditions. Peter Adamson and Juhana Toivanen explore the Medieval approach to animals in the Islamic and Latin traditions respectively. Both traditions were influenced by Hellenistic thought about animals and were primarily interested in animal nature only insofar as it could reveal human nature (112; 121). Like Aristotle, both traditions allowed animals to have a wide range of cognitive abilities including memory, imagination and estimation (105-106; 134-135). However, both traditions also agreed with Aristotle that, despite similarities with humans, animals could be distinguished by a lack of rationality (105-106; 126). For both traditions, metaphysical similarity with humans was not by itself sufficient to generate moral obligations to animals. But both traditions had some resources for acting to remove animal suffering on religious rather than ethical grounds (102; 146). Finally, both sets of Medieval thinkers shared an anxiety that human beings would fail to actualize their rational natures, and so allow themselves to 'remain at the level of beasts' (111) and be 'dominated by [their] own animality' (149). Separately, each of these chapters provides a detailed and technical examination of these traditions. These papers taken together and with Henry's Aristotle chapter, however, result in the first third of the collection repeatedly covering much of the same argumentative ground.

Two of the most interesting and original articles in the collection explore anxieties around meat-eating. In a collection which asks us to reconsider figures typically taken to be against animal rights, G. Fay Edwards' contribution does the same for Platonist figures taken to be Ancient precursors to modern ethical vegetarianism. Edwards convincingly argues that the vegetarianism of Plutarch and Porphyry was responsive to a range of concerns about human rather than animal welfare,

including: that eating animals might encourage cannibalism (29); that animals might be reincarnated humans (30-31); that meat-eating encouraged pleasure rather than rationality (44); and that vegetarianism promoted good health (50). Ultimately, Edwards presents a compelling argument that demands that we reconsider the Platonists' status as precursors to modern ethical vegetarianism. Cecila Muratori's engaging contribution focuses on the discovery of American cannibals, and the deconstructive influence which this had on the European distinction between human and animal (171). Like the Ancients and Medievals, Renaissance Europeans were concerned that humans could 'slide into animality' as a result of the meat they ate (178). Muratori's exploration of Renaissance Europe provides well-needed nuance to our understanding of a period of history which has 'long been neglected in favour of a concentration on Descartes' (165).

If the majority of these chapters represent the Western obsession with determining a characteristic which separates human beings from animals, Indian philosophy does not make such a 'barbaric mistake' (63). Amber D. Carpenter's contribution argues that on an Indian world view (Carpenter predominantly considers Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism) the distinction between humans and nonhuman animals is less rigid and enforced. In part, this is a result of a metaphysical system which includes reincarnation. Though an ontological commitment to reincarnation does not imply an ethical commitment to equal concern, Carpenter speculates that it does provide a 'foothold' from which to ground a compassionate stance towards animals (76-78). This combined with a general ethical principle of non-violence (*ahiṃsa*) (68) gives the Indian tradition an interesting and unique stance towards animals, and one which is underexplored within the animal rights debate.

The final chapters deal with the role of animals in scientific inquiry. Helen Steward's contribution explores the impact and contemporary relevance of a nineteenth century principle: 'Morgan's Canon'. The Canon states that animal actions should not be interpreted as resulting from 'higher' faculties when explanations exclusively referencing faculties 'lower on the psychological scale' can suffice (293). Steward explores the possible articulations and interpretations of this principle, its justification, and the results of the (mis)application of the principle to animal behaviours to convincingly conclude that The Canon should be abandoned in favour of general evidentialism (297). Finally, Philip Kitcher's chapter not only presents an outline of the thought of Charles Darwin, but also offers a position on animal rights which draws from Kitcher's wider project. After outlining the theory he defended in *The Ethical Project* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), Kitcher argues that his Darwinian approach to ethics can avoid the 'Peaceful Kingdom Thinking' he diagnoses in contemporary animal rights literature (279). Unfortunately, Kitcher does not ground this diagnosis in textual evidence, and his own position is underdeveloped, not moving beyond the assertion that we should focus on domestic animals (281) and that 'details matter' when deciding how to treat animals (292).

Overall, *Animals: A History* represents a genuine contribution to debates about animal cognition and animal ethics. This contribution comes not through the introduction of new figures or arguments, but rather through grounding existing figures and arguments in an impressive level of philosophical detail and historical depth. Those who read this book will no longer be satisfied with the lazy caricatures of Aristotle, Descartes, Kant and others which haunt our discourse about animals, but will see them as the worthy interlocutors and historically grounded thinkers that they are.

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